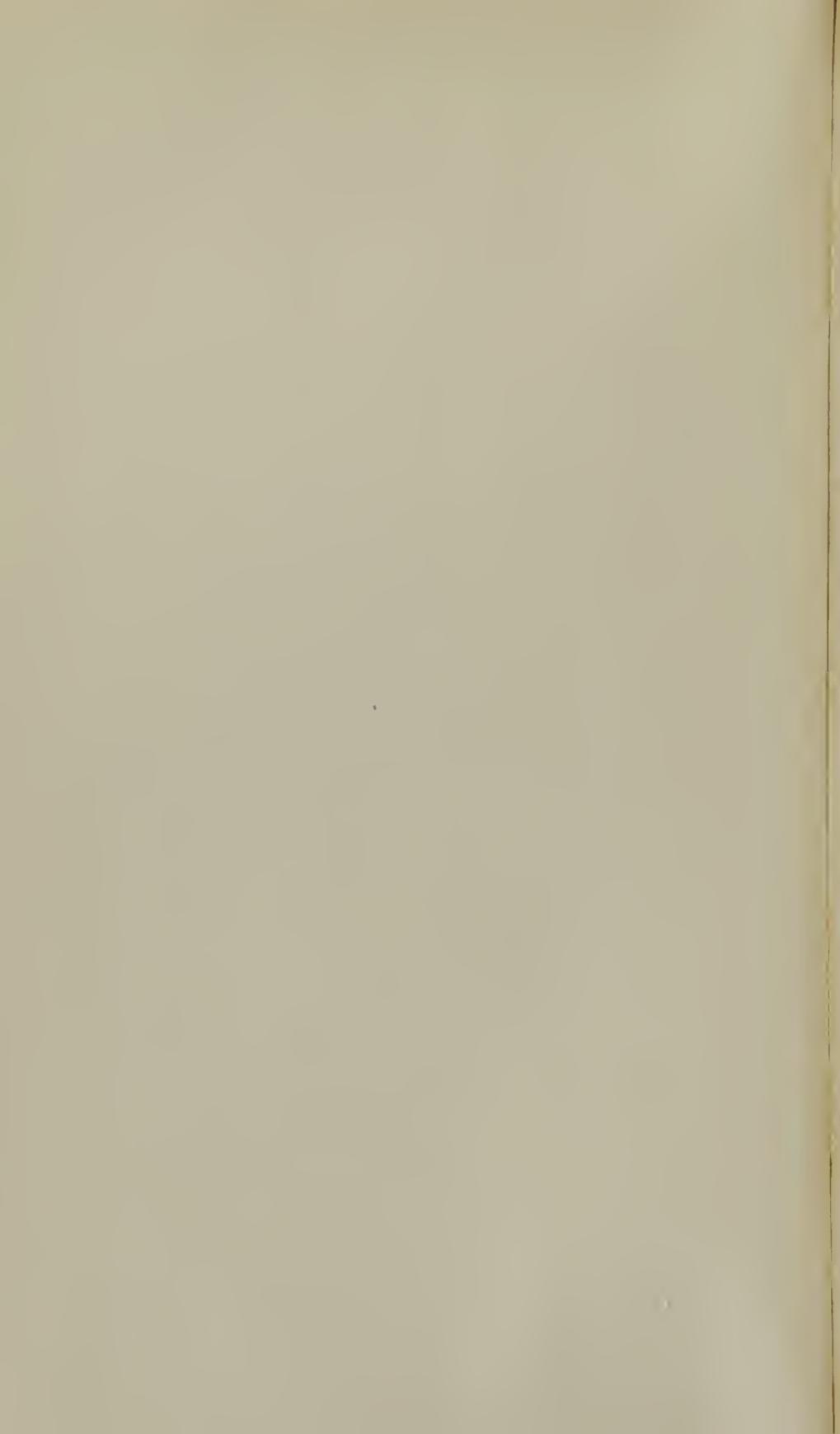


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A

DOMESTIC MEDICAL TREATISE
ON THE
NATURE, CAUSES, AND CURE
OF
DYSPEPSIA
AND
LIVER DISEASE.

INTENDED FOR THE PERUSAL AND GUIDE OF EVERY
DYSPEPTIC INDIVIDUAL.

This Treatise is the substance of a chapter in the 2d edition of the Author's "Domestic Guide to Medicine," and is now published in this separate form with a view to its more general and extensive usefulness.

BY DR. RALPH,

Graduate of the University of Edinburgh;—Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London;—&c. &c. &c.

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A

DOMESTIC MEDICAL TREATISE

ON THE

NATURE, CAUSES, AND CURE

OF

INDIGESTION AND DYSPEPSIA.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A CHAPTER FROM THE SECOND EDITION
OF THE AUTHOR'S "DOMESTIC GUIDE TO MEDICINE."

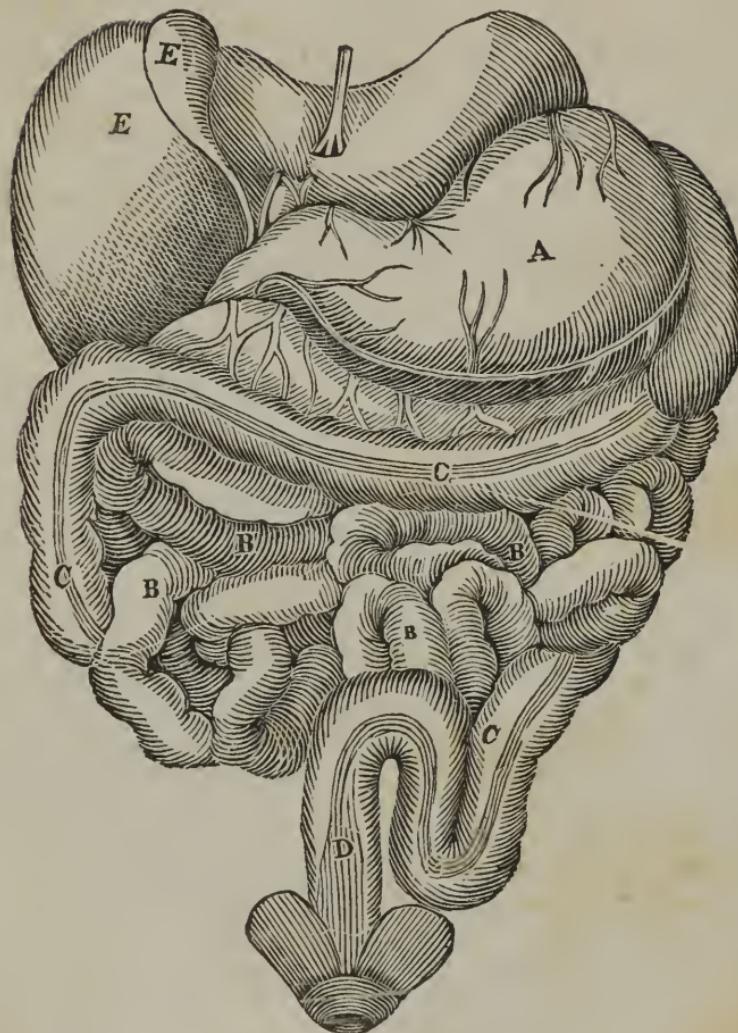
THE object of this domestic treatise being to impart the utmost knowledge to individuals on the subject of dyspepsia, and the consequences arising from it ; nothing which was thought in any measure calculated to ensure this object, is neglected here :—with this intention a few plates are introduced, descriptive of the organs with which dyspepsia is connected ; and, in its proper place, a colored plate is given, which will enable every one to understand the insidious and advancing nature of this malady,—especially the steps it follows in its progress towards the liver.

These are described with the utmost plainness, so that every individual may easily detect the different stages of dyspepsia ; and also see the reason and propriety of every measure recommended to prevent them.

PLATE I. presents a view of THE DIGESTIVE ORGANS, sometimes called the first passages; while the bowels alone are called the intestinal canal.—These consist of A, the stomach; B, the small intestines; C, the large intestine, or colon; D, the rectum; and E, the liver and gall-duct.

Plate 1.

THE ORGANS OF DIGESTION.

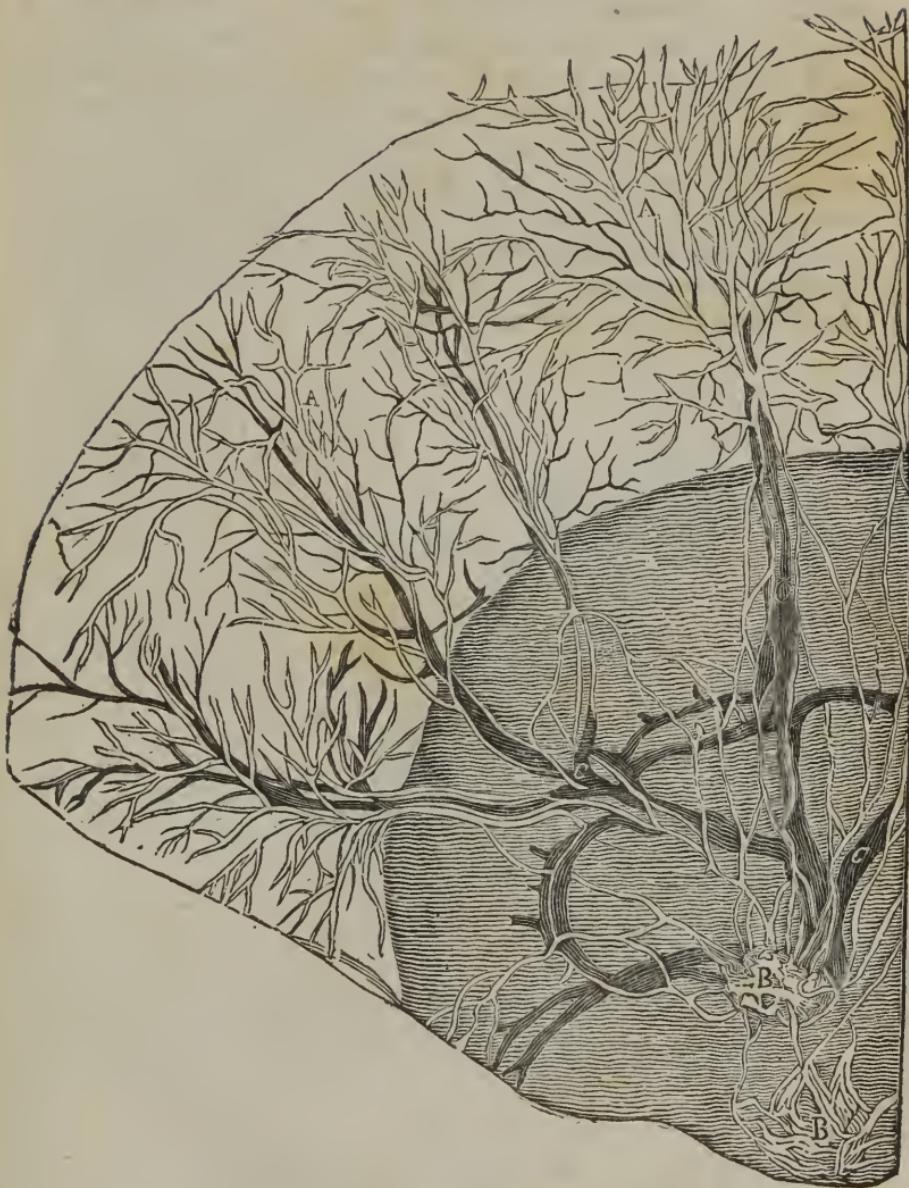


- A. The stomach, in which digestion is partly performed.
- B. The small intestines, in which digestion is completed.
- C. The large intestine, or colon, in which the residue of food collects.
- D. The rectum.
- E. The liver which secretes, and the gall-duct, which conveys the bile into the small intestines; these are the seat of bilious diseases, &c.

PLATE II. shows a portion of the small intestines into which the bile and other secretions are conveyed, for the purpose of completing the digestive process. It is while in these intestines that the food imparts its nourishment to the body ; but if the process of digestion be imperfect, or deranged, then, instead of bland and proper nutriment, a mass of crude impurities and vitiated humors is supplied. Further, these intestines are seen to abound with absorbent tubes, called lacteal vessels (A,) which take up such vitiated fluids, and convey them through the mesenteric glands (B,) into the blood and circulating system. There is also seen a large supply of blood-vessels (C,) of which the use will presently be shown, when speaking of the operation of the pills in purifying the blood, and carrying off its humors.

Plate 2.

A PORTION OF THE SMALL INTESTINES.

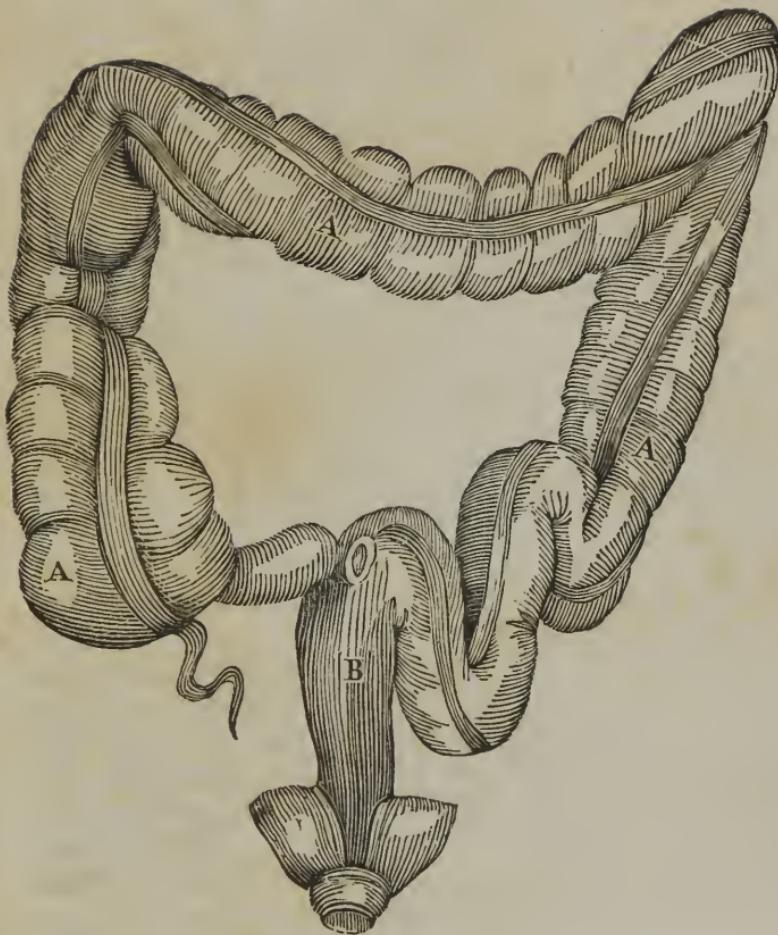


A. Lacteal vessels, having mouths by which they absorb the vitiated matter of corrupt and undigested food.
B. Mesenteric glands.
C. Large blood-vessels.

PLATE III. represents the large intestine or colon ; from its figure and dimensions some idea may be formed of the quantity of putrid refuse of undigested food which is apt to be accumulated therein. It begins on the lower part of the right side of the bowels, and passing upward, crosses under the stomach, and then passes downward on the left side. This explanation of its direction will serve to account for many of those pains and uneasy feelings which are frequently the subject of complaint, but which are not always suspected to arise from a disordered state of this intestine. It is also to be observed, that the colon is divided into little cells, or pouches, by a number of bands which run across it (A). It is in these cells that the ill-digested food accumulates, and from which it cannot be expelled by the ordinary purgatives now in use.

Plate 3.

THE COLON.



A. The cells which collect and retain the hardened refuse of the food, and are the seat of cholic, dysentery, &c. &c.

B. The rectum, the termination of the colon, the seat of piles, fistula, thread-worms, &c. &c.

These, therefore, are the principal organs of digestion; and the manner in which their important office is performed, is explained in the following chapter.

THE PROCESS OF HEALTHY DIGESTION EXPLAINED.

Having endeavored in the forgoing chapter to furnish the reader with a familiar description of the form of the various organs of digestion, it now becomes an easy task to explain what part each of these various organs performs in accomplishing this process;—it is as follows. The food, being received into the stomach, is there retained for a certain time, and by the action of the gastric juice becomes changed into a soft and uniform mass; this is all that the stomach has to do, and is termed “the first stage in the digestive process.”—The food as we have stated, being reduced into this pulpy state during its retention in the stomach, is now passed on into the small intestines, and undergoes a second change by the action of the bile and other secretions which here mix with it, and when this mixture is perfected the process of digestion is complete.

The meaning of digestion is this; that the nutritious portion of the food, of whatever kind it may be, is by the means detailed above, converted into a milky fluid, which is intended by nature to supply the growth and wasting of the body,—the refuse of the food passing on into the colon, (plate III.)

In order to convey this extracted fluid to the various parts of the body, which are constantly needing supply, a means of communication must be provided, and thus we find an innumerable quantity of little vessels, whose mouths open upon the inner surface of the intestinal passage, and there suck up this fluid, and convey it to the blood, where it becomes fitted for its various purposes. These little absorbent vessels are named “lacteals,” and the mesenteric glands, through which they pass, are beautifully exhibited in plate II.

But the nutriment of the food having been extracted, the residue becomes a useless mass, and must be disposed of. For this purpose the colon or large intestine, which is shown in plate III., is peculiarly adapted. It is large, and divided into cells or pouches, and in these the residue of the food collects, and after remaining there a certain period of time, is then expelled by a natural and easy effort of the bowels.

CHAPTER I.

DYSPEPSIA, INDIGESTION, &c. &c.

Since the first edition of this work, the attention of the author has been more than ever called to the subject of Dyspepsia and Indigestion ;—a disorder which he finds to be so exceedingly general and important as to claim every possible endeavor, in order that the nature, cases and cure of this prevailing disease, should be clearly and universally understood ; with this view he has revised the chapter on Dyspepsia with more than ordinary anxiety, and he trusts that a little attention to this disease will enable every individual to conduct the treatment of it with more satisfaction and success than has been usual heretofore. It may not indeed be right to promise a perfect cure in every individual case, but even in such as are tedious and inveterate, much may be done by way of alleviation; and, what is still more important, much may be done in the early stages of Indigestion to prevent the disease Dyspepsia, altogether.

In proceeding therefore with this object, the author will first endeavor to show the nature and extent of this serious disorder ; for, although many are aware that it is attended with a vast variety of distressing symptoms, both of body and mind, yet but few persons have the least idea of the number and of the fatal nature of many of the diseases which take their origin from it. For instance, who is aware that Dyspepsia is the frequent cause of fatal tubercular consumption,—of fatal enlargement and abscesses in the liver,—of fatal diseases of the head,—and of fatal disorders in the organs of generation, both of male and female ? But such, nevertheless, are facts, and they are such as to admit of satisfactory explanation. We all know that a variety of pains and sensations are frequently felt by dyspeptic persons. There is not a part of the body which may not be the seat of these sensations, nor is there a part in which they may not terminate in a permanent disease.

Suppose, which is a common occurrence, that a dyspeptic person complains of frequent attacks of pain in the side. These pains are

at first nothing more than the effects of the stomach upon the liver, through the medium of the nervous system, and are called nervous affections; they are not relieved by any thing applied to the side itself,—the means which relieve these are means which improve the state and condition of the stomach, and none others, so that it is evident they originate in this organ. But, after a time, these pains become continued and are more severe; they are also attended with some fever, and with a tenderness which is felt on pressing the side or taking a deep breathe. This is the first step which Dyspepsia makes to establish a disease in the liver; the pain has now become inflammatory instead of nervous, and will sooner or later terminate in what is called liver disease,—the word is used to signify enlargement and hardness of this organ, and this state of the liver finally breaks up the constitution. In the history of the progress of dyspepsia, therefore, we may remark three distinct stages. The first is when it produces pain in the liver, which is only felt occasionally, and which is not accompanied with a sense of tenderness on pressing it with the hand; this is called nervous, or sympathetic pain. The second stage begins when that pain becomes more continued, is increased on pressing the side with the hand, and is accompanied with slow pain; this is inflammatory, and is called chronic inflammation of the liver. The third stage begins in some persons, very quickly after this, and in others it is some length of time; sooner or later, however, after this chronic inflammation, it enlarges the organ, and, on examining the side, it is found to bulge out a little, and the liver may be distinctly felt to be larger, harder, and a little more tender than natural; this is the stage which is properly called LIVER DISEASE, and which will terminate in an abscess or a premature close of life.

Now all these diseases are observed to arise from Dyspepsia, and the different stages which intervene in its progress towards them, may be distinctly marked. Perhaps nothing will better serve the purpose of convincing individuals that such is the fact, than tracing some of these diseases from this common origin.

To begin with the diseases of infants and children. Water in the head is one of their most fatal disorders, and children often labor under this disease when it is not in the least suspected. This disease begins obscurely in the bowels;—it originates from some such disturbance of the organs of digestion as inflammation, which in adults we

should call dyspepsia. No doubt children have, in this early stage, a series of occasional and nervous pains in the head, but which they cannot express in words. At length, however, these pains alter their nervous and occasional character and become inflammatory. The poor mother all this time is but little aware of the consequences of this apparently trifling disorder of the bowels, nor does she deem it necessary to adopt the proper measures for relief, until she is alarmed by some fever and restlessness, perhaps some occasional screaming or convulsion.

But at this time the mischief has extended to the brain, and has established a chronic irritation or influx there, and which, if not speedily removed by prompt and proper measures, will assuredly issue in that fatal complaint of children, water in the head. The reason why this disorder is so very fatal, is because the remedies are availed of too late, or are not suited to the different stages of it. In the first stage, water in the head is easily cured, or rather prevented, by proper attention to the bowels ; but, in the second stage, it is necessary to look to the head also, and relieve the irritation there by local means. If this is not attended to, it frequently happens that all other means prove unavailing.

It is hardly necessary to detail the different stages which it passes through, for these are exactly similar to those which have already been related. The first is cough ;—it is a simple nervous or sympathetic cough ;—then comes a cough with some expectoration ; and after this, a more alarming cough, with constant uneasiness or pain, and with copious expectoration ; and, lastly, these are followed by weakness, emaciation, and with hectic fever.

Dyspepsia, further, has the same connection with disorders in persons more advanced in life. Apoplexy, the loss of memory, and the failure of sight and hearing, are frequently the consequences of this disease. With respect to apoplexy, it leads to this disorder in adults exactly as it does to water in the brain in children ; and the two first stages are just as clearly marked, and as certainly admit of cure. Another class of disorders arising from indigestion and dyspepsia, especially in elderly people, is that which affects the kidneys and urinary passages. These are particularly under the influence of the digestive organs, and in most instances the disorders of gravel and stone arise from this cause.

With respect to those complaints which are peculiar to the female economy, and are more distressing and fatal after the age of forty-five or fifty, these also are the frequent results of dyspepsia, and are frequently to be prevented altogether by attention to the organs of digestion at this critical period of life.

But not only are these fatal diseases in many instances, known to arise from dyspepsia, but a vast variety of complaints, which, though not so dangerous, are yet known to spring from this origin ;—such are hypochondriacal affections, melancholy, hysteria, palpitation, and the whole tribe of those complaints called Nervous. Indeed, indigestion presents itself in a thousand forms, and there are but few disorders, comparatively, which may not, and often do arise from it.

But there is another circumstance which claims to be mentioned in this place, it is this ;—that, among these complaints which arise from any other cause, there are none which can continue any length of time without disturbing the functions of some of the organs of digestion,—that is to say, without inducing temporary dyspepsia ; while on the other hand, there is no complaint which is not aggravated from the occurrence of dyspeptic symptoms. Indeed, this is the basis on which the author first prescribed his universal domestic medicine. It is not meant, however, that this single remedy is always sufficient in itself, for the cure of all complaints ; but, that it always formed a safe and useful part in every other plan of treatment ; a number of diseases require no other remedy.

THE CAUSES OF DYSPEPSIA.

There are two immediate causes which produce dyspepsia,—these are a weakness of the stomach, and a deficiency or depraved condition of a fluid called gastric juice. But, besides the immediate causes, there are many which are called remote or occasional ; and these are the causes of dyspepsia which are to be mentioned here, because it is over these that we have the most control.

It may be well first to mention some hurtful practices which are in very common use,—such as chewing tobacco, taking snuff, and

smoking. It is acknowledged that many persons enjoy an excellent state of health who indulge in these practices ; but they are not indebted to these practices for that excellent health ; all that can be said of such, is, that they enjoy good health, not because they chew, &c., but notwithstanding they do so. The juice and fume of tobacco is a narcotic poison, and no doubt some portion of it passes into the stomach, and, therefore, the practice should be avoided, at least, by dyspeptic persons.

The same observations apply to dram-drinking. There is no cause more productive of dyspepsia than this ; nor is there any one which so much aggravates it when it has once commenced. With regard to the pernicious properties of alcohol, these will be stated under the article of Diet ;—the practice only is to be mentioned here, and this is entirely condemned.

Strong spices, acids, cold ice, and cold or very hot water, and anything which distends the stomach—even if it is only water—is hurtful, and leads to dyspepsia.

Another practice, on which the author would lay considerable stress, is the habit of eating too fast. This error is as remarkable and prevalent as dyspepsia itself, and he cannot help associating in his mind these two circumstances as cause and effect. There must be some prevailing and powerful cause for the uncommon proportion of dyspepsia which is observed in this country, and it is worthy of enquiry, how far the practice of fast eating may be this very cause.

With this view, we are led to reflect on what takes place in the process of digestion. In the first place, the stomach secretes a fluid called gastric juice ; and when the stomach is empty, this stimulates its coats and produces appetite. Next, the mouth is supplied with glands to produce saliva, and also a set of teeth to grind with. Now, the very sight of dinner, and to a hungry person, even the smell or sound of it, will produce an abundant flow of this saliva,—the mouth waters, as they say,—but when he begins to eat, or grind his food, the salivary glands are kept in constant motion, and the quantity of fluid thus produced is very great,—it is half a pint, at least, at every meal. The use which nature makes of this secretion, is to mix it with the food, and thus prepare it for digestion. Now, when food thus mixed and softened, passes to the stomach, it

readily absorbs the gastric juice already mentioned, by which it is dissolved and properly digested. Also, the gastric juice being now engaged, the sense of hunger immediately abates.

The error, and the consequence of eating fast, therefore, must now appear to every one. First, the food is swallowed without being broken down, and thus deprived of the qualities which saliva give it, and when it passes to the stomach, it cannot absorb or mix with gastric juice so fast as a softer mass would do. The latter, perhaps, is the greatest evil; for a portion of the gastric juice being unengaged, it still acts upon the stomach, and goads the appetite beyond the limits of digestive power. By way of further explanation, it may also be remarked, that if you are called from dinner before your appetite is half sufficed, and kept away for 10 or 15 minutes, you cannot eat again. This failure of the appetite arises from the thorough mixing of all the gastric juice with the food already eaten,—having had more than ordinary time to do so.

The author has prolonged his observations on this subject, from the persuasion that this practice, at least in New York, is a very frequent cause of indigestion and dyspepsia; how far this single circumstance may account for the uncommon prevalence of these disorders, he will leave for others to determine.

High-seasoned dishes, and a variety of meats, are also hurtful; these, in general, only induce an individual to take more than the stomach should receive. It seldom happens that we take too little food, provided it is suitable and nutritious, but taking too much, is a very common thing. Those whose occupations are of a sedentary kind, should keep this constantly in mind, and not only should they limit themselves in quantity, but should also select the most suitable and light inquality.

Constipation of the bowels, is another cause of dyspepsia, which merits great attention;—this is fraught with various evils, and is always under a person's own control. It is perfectly inexcusable to slight this constant cause of an uncomfortable state of mind and body.

Circumstances which depress the spirits, as grief and fear, as well as the harassing anxieties of business, are also causes of dyspepsia. Hot rooms, cold, damp situations, and damp night air, may likewise be added to the number.

TREATMENT OF DYSPEPSIA.

Having thus far endeavored to explain the nature and the causes of dyspepsia, it now remains to point out the best means of preventing, curing, or alleviating this prevailing malady.

This subject, however, seems to divide itself into moral, or domestic management, on the one hand, and medical treatment on the other; and, as in many instances in the early stages of dyspepsia, nothing more is required than a little attention to circumstances of diet, bodily exercise, and a regulated state of the bowels; so there seems a peculiar propriety in beginning with the

MORAL AND DOMESTIC TREATMENT OF DYSPEPSIA.

It is hardly necessary to remark, that in every case of dyspepsia, as well as in every disorder, it is of the greatest consequence to remove the cause, if it is possible. A dyspeptic person, therefore, will, no doubt, think it worth while to read attentively what has been said on the subject of these causes in order to avoid them; and, next, he will feel the want of information on some of the following particulars. We will begin with

DIET.

The quantity and quality of food, as well as the frequency of taking meals, are subjects on which dyspeptic persons are constantly enquiring; and, indeed, they are matters of so much importance as to merit the most careful and minute consideration. In the following remarks, the author does not pretend to any thing new, for similar observations have been made by many others;—he has

however, the peculiar satisfaction, after nearly 30 years experience, of knowing that they are correct and true.

In general, the diet of dyspeptic persons should consist of animal more than vegetable food.

Fat, and even the lean part of meat which has much fat intermixed, is difficult of digestion.

Mutton and *beef*, but mutton much more than beef, is easy of digestion. There is nothing, in general, which suits a weak stomach better than a *broiled mutton chop*, rather underdone, with a mealy potatoe.

Game is easy, but *fish* is not so—and when it is digested, fish affords but little nourishment.

White meats, such as veal and pork, are not so easy as red meats ; it is true they are not so apt to excite fever, but owing to the quantity of animal mucilage they contain, which is always of difficult digestion, they do not agree with a dyspeptic stomach.

Pork and *tongues* are not proper, on account of the quantity of fat in their substance. . .

Among the poultry tribe, *geese* and *ducks* have too much oily fat for a weak stomach ; *turkey* is light and easier, but *fowl* is easier still. Next to mutton, perhaps *fowl* is the lightest animal food that can be taken, and is very suitable to a weak stomach, whether in dyspepsia, or in the convalescent state of fevers, or the like.

Venison, especially the lean of it, is very easy of digestion ; so are *hare* and *partridge*, but the *pheasant* of this country is not so light and easy. It scarcely need be mentioned with regard to every kind of meat, that it becomes tender, and more digestible, by keeping.

Salt meat, and especially that which was originally tough and hard, as well as dried and smoked meats ; also articles fried in a pan, are all heavy, and of very difficult digestion ; and yet, which is a curious fact, a fried rasher of bacon will sit easy and be relished by some dyspeptic persons. This indeed has so often occurred under the immediate observation of the author, that he would fain recommend the trial of it to every dyspeptic person, particularly to such whose stomach is so squeamish as scarcely to relish any thing. Let it be taken in the morning, at breakfast.

It may be mentioned in this place, also, that any article of diet, however it may seem improper, if there is a particular longing for it,

may be indulged in by way of trial.—It is astonishing to see how many things of this kind, the stomach will digest a little of.

Eggs, to most people, are light and easy, but they ought to be soft boiled, and eaten with stale bread.

New bread is exceedingly difficult of digestion; it forms a tough mass of paste in the stomach, which the gastric juice cannot penetrate and dissolve; considerable stress should be laid on this particular remark, as new and even hot bread is too commonly partaken of.

Minced up meat, and articles mashed, as potatoes, are not so good as when roughly broken down and prepared with the teeth; the reason is, as has already been stated, not being mixed up with saliva.

Roasting, Boiling, and Broiling, is better than any other cooking, but these should not be carried too far;—a little and good, instead of a little and often, should be the dyspeptic's motto;—you cannot say that meat can be good and nutritious when every part is cooked away, and nothing but thread and a bundle of muscular fibre left; this is the part of meat which is most difficult to digest, and which, when digested, yields the very least nourishment.

Meat should not be cooked farther than is sufficient to coagulate certain parts which are between the fibres, just as you set the white of eggs. Never mind if it looks red,—this is all the better,—you have then the good of the meat, and it digests easier and better.

Solid meat should always be given in preference to broth or soups, whenever the stomach is not too weak to bear ever so small a quantity; one ounce of properly cooked meat is better than a quart of the strongest beef-tea; and, moreover, broth and soups seldom agree with the dyspeptic.—Whenever beef-tea or the like must be had recourse to, be sure you put some little substance in it;—toast bread is the best,—next to this,—rice.

Vegetables do not often agree well with dyspeptic persons,—they ferment and generate wind and acidity.

Sauce, which includes salt, pepper, mustard, &c.—should be used in moderation;—they assist in the process of digestion, and enable a weak stomach to exert its powers. Care should be taken lest they excite the appetite to overload the stomach;—in health this is a very common effect. Those articles of diet which most require them, are such as have been noticed as the least easy of digestion;—

as geese, ducks, toasted cheese, &c., and these are the things with which mustard, pepper, stuffing and sauces, are generally eaten.

Butter is very often found to disagree with a dyspeptic stomach; when this is observed it should be avoided; no habit or perseverance in its use will surmount this difficulty in such cases; the same may be said of *cheese*; and the use of either should be determined by experience and observation.

Vegetables,—*pease, beans, cabbage, and waxy potatoes*, are the worst articles of this class; mealy potatoes and turnips are better;—broccoli is the best of all vegetables.

Fruit,—such as *melons, cucumbers*, and the like, are cold and very bad; but *gooseberries* and *pears* are better; the best of all fruits, however, are ripe *strawberries, peaches*, and *apples*. But there is this exception with regard to fruit, that when any kind is found to agree, it is always safe and proper to indulge in such with moderation. Very acid fruits are often observed to disagree; and with respect to preserves, these are almost always improper;—even a little lump of sugar in tea or coffee will derange the stomach in some dyspeptic people for many days.

The quantity of food to be taken at each meal, is another matter of great importance. Generally speaking, dyspeptic persons, as well as those in health, take too much; a great variety of dishes, and those of a savory and inviting flavor, lead to this error; but a far more serious and certain cause of this is to be found in eating too fast. It has been already stated in what manner this effect is thus produced. It will be remembered that the gastric juice is the fluid on which the appetite depends, and when this is mixed and engaged with food more slowly masticated, the sense of hunger ceases; but, if lump after lump is swallowed with rapidity, there is no time to absorb and neutralize this fluid, so that the appetite continues on, and a larger quantity of food is taken, than the stomach can digest.

There is a certain period at meals, if the food is duly masticated, when the sensation of enough is felt. This should always be attended to, especially by dyspeptic persons, and immediately complied with. One mouthful after this is frequently sufficient, in the weak and delicate, to upset the whole digestive process.

The frequency of meals is another point to be considered. The advice so often given to eat “a little and often” is not good advice.

Two principal meals, at which animal food is taken, is generally quite sufficient for dyspeptic persons. Whoever will take the trouble of perusing the chapter on the article of digestion, will see the reason why it is so. The stomach is a muscular organ, and is intended to have a time of rest, like other muscles, in order to recruit its strength. And, further, it will there be seen that digestion is a process which is not finished in the stomach; the food, when it passes to the bowels, undergoes another change, and then the process of digestion is completed. Now, if you interrupt this latter stage by a perpetual call of nervous fluid to the stomach, you rob the bowels of that share of energy which is quite essential to complete it. Between these principal meals, however, a lighter kind of food,—as a cracker or toast and tea, or coffee, is very proper, and, in the summer time, the use of fruit should be encouraged.

Drinking.—Some have gone so far as to recommend that no fluid at all should be drank at meals; but this is an extreme, and without reason. Some dry foods absolutely require diluting; and again, the evaporation which is continually going on from the skin and from the lungs, as well as the different secretions of the body, demand a certain supply of liquid. On the other hand, there is no doubt but too much fluid is often taken at meals, and that this practice is acquired from custom. The principal evil of drinking largely at meals is, that it dilutes the gastric juice too much, and thus disqualifies it for its office. The best rule to follow in this matter is the dictate of nature. Persons in health are not much troubled with thirst, and many have no inclination to drink at meals; if you have no thirst therefore, drink nothing at your dinner; but if you have, it is better to assuage it moderately. It should be mentioned however, that in many instances, a little would suffice where much is taken; this is the point to be observed by dyspeptic persons.

But the most difficult question yet remains;—what is the best beverage in dyspepsia?

Alcohol, or spirit, is the active ingredient in all fermented liquors, whether wine, ale, cider, or any thing else; and this ingredient in any shape, is unnecessary to persons in health; but, to the dyspeptic, it is peculiarly unfortunate and destructive. If it were asked, which is the least hurtful of the various wines and pleasant liquors, with which the table is frequently supplied, it may be answered, that which

contains the least alcohol or spirit;—such as claret and the lighter wines, mild ale or cider.

With respect to distilled spirits, such as brandy, rum, &c., there is a remarkable circumstance pertaining to these, which should be known to every one. It has been said that all fermented drinks contain alcohol, and that the hurtful property of each is in proportion to the quantity of alcohol it contains; but, the circumstance to note is this:—that when alcohol or spirit has been separated from any one of these by the act of distillation, it then acquires a new and deleterious quality, and one which cannot afterwards be corrected. In vain is ardent spirit diluted, and reduced again to the strength of wine, or ale; it is true, that it is less hurtful in its diluted than its undiluted state; but it never loses its new property of poisoning; and, in any form, is the most enfeebling and unfortunate article a dyspeptic person can determine on. Distilled spirits, therefore, is out of the question, and but in very few exceptions, is never to be thought of.

Home made wines are very apt to run into fermentation in the stomach, and greatly to oppress it with acidity and wind.

Beer is a compound which does not well agree with very feeble stomachs; it best agrees with those who have been reduced by fevers or other causes, and where the stomach is not weaker than other organs. There it is useful as a beverage and medicine, and wonderfully recruits the strength. But London bottled porter is far to be preferred to every other kind for such a purpose.

Cider, provided it is not very sour, is a mild and good article of beverage, particularly in hot weather.

Foreign wines generally agree with dyspeptic persons, and none better than good Port, provided, it is not found absolutely binding to the bowels. The reason why Port is not in more general use in America, is, because it is too frequently made up and adulterated with distilled spirits; but, when it is pure and good, nothing is found more generally to suit the dyspeptic. It may be taken alone, or in water, and those who really stand in need of any thing more than water, or toast and water, will find it to be the most grateful and proper beverage they can take. The next to good Port, properly diluted, are the lighter foreign wines, of which none is better than claret. This also may be diluted. But, whatever wine is fixed on,

much care will be necessary that it be not carried too far. Whenever it flushes the face, or excites an unnatural flow of spirits, this may certainly be suspected.

Green tea, and very strong *black tea* and *coffee*, are found by the experience of many dyspeptic people, as well as others, to be hurtful to the stomach. They have some effect upon the nervous system, by which sleep is driven away, and a tremulous state of the nerves is induced. Moderately strong black tea or coffee, is, on the other hand, grateful and refreshing. One great evil which should be noticed in taking tea or coffee, is, in drinking it too hot. Every thing very hot, weakens the stomach.

Exercise and air are so well known to befriend the dyspeptic, that it would seem unnecessary to mention them here. It must be observed, however, that exercise may be taken to excess, and that there is a time when, and a time when not, to engage in it.

In cases of very great weakness, unsuitable or excessive exercise is to be carefully avoided. Many persons in the convalescent stage of fever are thrown back for many days, by making more exertion than their strength will allow. From this fact we may take a lesson in cases of dyspepsia. Excessive and exhausting exercise, as well as inactivity and indolence, are equally to be avoided. The gentlest kind of exercise is that of sailing, and next to this, is riding in a carriage; but, if it can be borne, a still better kind of exercise, is riding on horseback. This has justly been extolled in every age, and it seems to owe its peculiar advantages to the shaking and concussion given to the intestinal and digestive organs. Neither is walking to be held, by any means, inferior for the general purposes of exercise. It is not convenient for every one to ride on horseback; and, after all, it is more than probable that the exercise of walking, being more universal in its effect, and certainly more natural, is better calculated to support a free equal circulation than any other.

One thing respecting exercise should not, however, be forgotten; —it is the time of taking it. Nothing is more common than to hear it recommended before a meal. Accordingly, many persons who have been fatigued and jaded in the banking-house or office, are in the habit of taking a walk or ride, or some fatiguing exercise, just before their dinner. This is quite ill-timed. Such advisers do not consider that in dyspepsia, the stomach is always very weak and

feeble. Now, the immediate effect of exercise is to exhaust the general strength and vigor of the body, but in doing this, the stomach is affected too. Who, then, does not see the striking impropriety of weakening this organ just before a meal,—at the very moment when you call upon it for its utmost vigor and exertion. Avoid fatiguing exercise, therefore, as much as possible, at this hour; and when your time can be commanded, it is better to avoid it also immediately after dinner. In one hour and a half, an ordinary meal is thoroughly digested in the stomach, and passes to the bowels. There is no time when exercise can better be sustained than now.

The same remarks apply, most accurately, to the labors of the mind; and those who wish to husband out their intellectual powers to most advantage, would do well to think of this.

Exercise taken in the open air is incomparably better for the purposes of health than any other. Indeed in many instances, particularly in ladies, the author has been called to witness many serious disorders chiefly originating from the want of exercise in the open air. The occupation of many mothers is very often any thing but indolent or inactive; and yet, because this exercise has been within the house, their health has suffered.

Night air is not good, neither is a damp cold day to be chosen for it. A damp cold situation also is unfavorable to dyspepsia. In such circumstances a week or two's change of air is always beneficial.

MEDICAL TREATMENT OF INDIGESTION AND DYSPEPSIA.

The domestic management of this disorder having been very carefully and minutely described, the medical treatment will now follow with peculiar advantage. Indeed, in the early stages of indigestion and dyspepsia, and even in those cases which have continued long, provided no other disorder has been induced, the hints which have been already given upon the causes and domestic management of this complaint, will be sufficient, with the aid of very little medicine, to cure or prevent the disorder altogether.

It cannot, however, be said, that no medicine at all is required; for so intimately is the dyspeptic stomach connected with a certain state and condition of the intestinal passages, and so frequently does the disorder take its origin entirely from a constipation of the bowels, or

some irregularity which might be easily corrected, that a safe and suitable medicine for these purposes is exceedingly desirable, and forms, indeed, a most important part of its successful treatment. It was a strong conviction of this necessity which originally led the author to compose his Universal Domestic Vegetable Medicine, (formerly called Improved Hygeian Pills,) and the great demand and unexampled confidence it now enjoys in almost every town and village in the United States and other countries, is a gratifying proof of its value and utility.

The various medicines often advertised for these complaints have all their separate objections. Some of them, if useful in one stage of the disorder, are quite injurious in another ; and all of them, without exception, are too weakening in dyspepsia. Moreover, most of them contain mercury, and therefore are by no means fit for private and domestic purposes.

One of the peculiarities of this Domestic Medicine, and which relates especially to the milder pills, or No. 2, is, that they may be continued for any length of time, without the slightest weakening effect ; indeed, instead of this, the bowels as well as the parts subservient to the office of digestion, are strengthened and invigorated by their use. This is a quality of immense importance, for many of the causes of dyspepsia are of a nature which cannot be removed, and therefore require a remedy which may be, if necessary, constantly resorted to. Such is the case, for instance, when constipation of the bowels is the immediate effect of sedentary habits, as in watchmakers, tailors, milliners, and many others. It is not reasonable to expect that a medicine can so far change the constitution, as to prevent the recurrence of that effect, so long as these sedentary habits are continued ; and, as it is not in every person's power to alter or to choose his trade or occupation, so it is of great importance that every one should have the means of obviating those peculiar diseases originating from them. Many are the serious disorders, besides dyspepsia, which are common to persons of sedentary habits ; such as apoplexy, the piles, the gravel, and a multitude of others, but the first step to all of these, is constipation of the bowels ; and this immediate effect, it is in the power of every one to obviate with a very little trouble and expense,—simply by taking a dose of these mild aperient pills, as long as the occasion for them is required.

But, it is not meant by this that a dyspeptic person does not occasionally require, the assistance of other medicine ; for of this the author is perfectly aware. Such medicines however, are but few in number, and these he now intends to speak of in the following order ; and at the same time to mention very carefully those stages of dyspepsia, and those particular symptoms in which they are most frequently required. He will begin with

Emetics.—In the early stages of indigestion, some persons recommend emetics ; but these are scarcely necessary except in cases where some tough or indigestible article of diet is known to have been taken,—such as is in the following case,—(taken from the author's note book :—" Yesterday was called to see a little boy about 10 years old, who had been troubled for some hours with a pain at the top of his head. This pain was confined to one spot, and which he compared to the sensation of moving up and down with every pulsation. Towards night, about ten o'clock, it had increased to an extreme degree, so as to become necessary to relieve it. It appeared that this little boy was fond of the liver of fish, and of this he had indulged very freely at his dinner. There was no sickness complained of, nor any circumstance which pointed to the stomach as the cause ; but, knowing that the liver of fish contains an oily fluid which is very indigestible, it seemed expedient to relieve the stomach without delay. Twenty drops of hartshorn in a little water was therefore given, and, in less than two minutes afterwards, a large quantity of liver, exactly of the appearance of having just been eaten, and mixed with undigested fish and a quantity of a glary fluid, was then brought up. This was at ten o'clock, and his dinner had been taken at one o'clock, so that it had remained nine hours in the stomach without sustaining any alteration from the gastric juice. Immediately after this the pain abated, and he went to sleep, and awoke quite comfortable in the morning."

Ether, Eau de Cologne, &c.—This seems a proper place to notice several domestic applications, which are useful in relieving various pains arising out of indigestion ; and, in slighter cases, or where it is not quite so probable that there is any thing in the stomach which oppresses it, these are very useful, and should be tried in preference to emetics.

An excellent remedy of this kind, is a little ether, which should be

poured into the hollow of the hand, and held to the forehead on the temple until it quite evaporates ;—the effect of the ether is to produce a pungent, burning sensation, and often effectually relieves a nervous pain. Eau de Cologne, or hot brandy, used in the same way, or rubbed upon the skin, are remedies of the same nature.

Mustard poultices, or a piece of brown paper soaked in hot vinegar and well peppered, are also useful domestic remedies, but these are not so instantaneous in relieving as those just mentioned, though their good effect is more enduring.

The MILD APERIENT PILLS, or No. 2.—There is not a single stage of dyspepsia, nor a single disorder arising out of it, which does not need a carefully regulated state of the bowels ; and, for this purpose, nothing more safe and suitable can be thought of than this mild and gentle composition. In every case it is proper to begin by clearing out the bowels ; and, throughout the whole continuance of dyspepsia, it will be desirable to keep them a little more than naturally open, by the repetition of these pills. Four or five may be taken at bed-time,—they will not operate till the morning, but if they do not then, the same number should be repeated immediately after breakfast.

It is supposed that every one will consider what has been said on the subject of the causes of dyspepsia, and avoid such as are in his power. At the same time that the remarks on diet, (none of which have been here advanced without due and anxious consideration,) will be availed of, as circumstances may demand. In this way indigestion may be cured before it can assume the more settled form of dyspepsia ; and thus the possibility of many serious and fatal maladies will be prevented. After this, nothing more will be required than to avoid the various causes which have been mentioned ; and, of all things, to avoid a constipated state of the bowels, by the use of No. 2. whenever there be occasion.

The MORE ACTIVE PURGATIVES, or No. 1, are of the greatest use in those individual cases which require a stronger purgative. It now and then occurs that the bowels are too sluggish to be thoroughly evacuated by the milder pills, but when this is once effected, they are better kept from falling into their former state by the milder pills. On this account, some begin with a dose or two of No. 1. Another use which is made of these, is to give a dose or two if the milder pills become inactive. It is astonishing to see how perfectly they

restore the active virtues of No. 2, if at any time they become too mild from long continued use. It is very proper to change aperient medicine occasionally, and these two pills are so arranged as to aid and perpetuate the good effects of one another. Others have found an excellent effect from taking a dose of mild ones over night, and a dose of the stronger ones early in the morning. The evacuation of the bowels is, in this manner, very effective without violent action. Lastly, with respect to the purgatives, these are often exceedingly useful also, in the event of diarrhoea, which occasionally comes on. This is always the effect of some undigested or irritating material in the bowels, and which must be carried off before any attempt be made to stop the purging. After this, six or eight drops of laudanum in camomile tea, will generally counteract it;—if this is not sufficient, then half a tea-spoonful, or less, of chalk, may be further added to each glass of the camomile infusion. The ordinary dose of the purgatives is about five; but this must be regulated entirely by their effect.

Bitters are often useful when the stomach is very weak, but these are to be only of the lighter class. The most suitable articles of this kind are camomile, bitter orange-peel, or quassia. All of which should be taken in the form of tea. Every one knows how to make these. A moderate handful of camomile flowers, or an ounce of dried orange-peel, or one tea-spoonful of rasped quassia-root, is to be steeped in a pint of boiling water till it is cold, and of either of these, a wine-glass full should be taken two or three times a day. Perhaps the camomile tea is the best of all. The stronger tonics, such as bark, are seldom to be ventured on. As to valerian, castor, or the like,—the author has no faith in any of these,—the lighter bitters already mentioned, do all that these can do.

Aromatics are also useful in dyspepsia, and, therefore, a little bruised ginger, cloves, or caraway seeds, may be added to the stomachic infusions above mentioned. Ginger is the best.

Alkalies are such things as *soda*, spirit of *hartshorn*, and *magnesia*. These are particularly useful when there is acidity in the stomach, which is known by sour risings and eructations of wind. The dose of hartshorn is about 20 or 30 drops, and this medicine is exceedingly supporting to a feeble and dyspeptic stomach. The magnesia is, preferable to the carbonate of soda, only when some opening quality

as well as an anti-acid is desirable. The dose of these is about half a tea-spoonful in each wine-glass of either of the bitter infusions.

Chalybeates, that is, different preparations of iron. These are justly classed among the most strengthening articles of medicine; chalybeates, therefore, might be supposed to be often prescribed in dyspepsia,—a complaint essentially connected with so much weakness. They are not, however, very often used in this complaint, except when it arises from one particular cause; but, in that, they prove of most extraordinary utility.

The dyspepsia now referred to is that which occurs in delicate females about the age of puberty. Most of the numerous symptoms which then appear are of a dyspeptic character, and are relieved by the same remedies which are availed of in ordinary dyspepsia; but, to these, in this case, the use of chalybeate medicine is superadded.

Indeed, the various preparations of this mineral constitute the remedy on which the chief reliance is to be placed with a view of assisting nature in accomplishing that important function in the female constitution, on which her future health and happiness depend. This subject, however, will be considered in its proper place; the only remark which seems called for here, is, respecting the best form or preparation which can be given in this species of dyspepsia.

The simplest and the best form of chalybeate medicine is the carbonate of iron. This is a powder which may be purchased at the druggist's, and a small tea-spoonful of it may be taken in molasses, night and morning, and continued for a month or six weeks; —or, the common filings of iron may be taken in the same way.

Let it be remembered that this is recommended in the dyspepsia of *young women*, and that throughout the course, the bowels should be kept in a strictly regulated state by the mild aperient pills, taken at bed time. Those in whom the face is pale and bloated, and the feet are swollen and cold, stand most in need of chalybeates. On the contrary, those who are fresh-colored, and of a full plump habit, are not proper subjects for chalybeates; neither should they be taken at any time when there is any inflammatory pain in any part of the body, or when there is any fever.

Blue pill.—This leads to the subject of mercury;—an article of medicine which merits every care and consideration. There is scarcely a medicine, perhaps, which has ever been the subject of so

much prejudice, or which admits of better use, and, at the same time, more abuse, than mercury; and yet there is none which admits of plainer directions for its use.

The property of mercury is to institute a certain determined action of its own, by which a variety of disorders are entirely cured. This is all we know of many remedies on which the utmost confidence is often placed, and this is all which is necessary we should know respecting mercury in the treatment of dyspepsia. It will be the principal object of the author, therefore, in this place to point out, First, what those stages of dyspepsia are, in which mercury is required; and next, the extent to which it should be carried.

The use of mercury in dyspepsia is generally determined by the appearance and color of the evacuations of the bowels.

The proper and natural color of the stools, is a deep brownish yellow; and this color undergoes but very little alteration from the kind of food we take. It is the bile which gives this natural color to them; and it is only when this secretion is unhealthy or defective, that we have much alteration in the color of the stools. Now, when dyspepsia continues any length of time, it has the effect of disturbing the healthy action of the liver; and, then, the bile is altered, both in quality and color. To remedy this disturbance of the liver, the blue pill is sometimes given, and, therefore, when we want to know if mercury is required in cases of dyspepsia, we have nothing more to do than notice the nature and color of the stools; and if these are of a brownish yellow color, and have no remarkably offensive odor, then the blue pill is not required, and would do injury. It is much to be regretted, that the blue pill or calomel is often given in dyspepsia, and other complaints, when it cannot be of any use, and then it never fails to be injurious. But this is the abuse, and not the use, of mercury. In many instances, dyspepsia continues years without disturbing the secretion of the liver, and sometimes it never does so. Neither is it every slight or temporary alteration of the color of the stools, which calls for mercury. Before this medicine is ventured on, it is proper to ascertain if the deviation from this natural color has continued long, and whether it may, in any measure, be the effect of food. Some articles are known to produce a change of color;—spinage will cause them to be very green; rhubarb very yellow; and chalybeate medicines will make them quite black; but

all these things are easily ascertained, and, besides, they are only temporary and occasional. Upon the whole, therefore, the examination of the color of the motions affords a very plain and easy rule to determine when the use of mercury is, and when it is not, indicated, in the treatment of dyspepsia.

But, it is not in every case in which the use of mercury is indicated by the color of the stool, that mercury must, of necessity, be given; for in many instances, this color of the stool, and that affection of the liver which produces it, are entirely and perfectly removed by a course of the mild domestic pills, No. 2, of the author. The effect upon that portion of the bowels immediately connected with the liver is to produce a healthy action there, and this healthy action is communicated to the liver through the medium of the gall-duct, so that healthy bile and a natural appearance of the stool, are thus effected. There is scarcely a day in which the author is not consulted by persons who are conscious of this effect of his mild aperient pills in their own particular case. It is not, therefore, always *expedient* to have recourse to mercury, even where it might be proper.

This is a fact the more important to be known, because, with some individuals, mercury is a very debilitating medicine; and there are others who have a great aversion even to the name of mercury. When the natural color of the stool is altered in dyspeptic persons, there is still a variety of colors to be observed; sometimes it is green, or white, or clay-colored,—being destitute of bile altogether. The most frequent variety, however is, black, or a color nearly approaching it,—and this is more commonly the case in habitual constipation of the bowels. The stools are also generally more offensive. In addition to these simple and plain directions, it may be mentioned that the tongue is almost always furred, or covered more or less with a whitish or a brownish coat, particularly at its root.

In dyspepsia, when the tongue is clammy and more or less coated with this fur, it will be proper to examine the color of the evacuations and the bowels, and when these are such as have been described, it may be known assuredly that the action of the liver is disturbed, and the disease is gaining ground.

Under these circumstances then, the question may arise,—shall I take mercury? to this it is answered no;—take the mild aperients, for in 99 cases in every hundred, these will prove sufficient to restore

the healthy action of the liver and remove these symptoms. The only use to make of mercury then, is in those instances in which the evacuations still continue of this unnatural color, notwithstanding aperients have been taken and persisted in for some length of time,—for some weeks at least ; under these circumstances mercury may certainly be taken with great advantage. This being then determined on, the next thing to consider is the choice of mercury and the extent to which it should be carried.

There are two preparations of mercury chiefly now in use ; the blue pill and calomel ; but the mildest of these, and by far the most suitable in dyspepsia is the blue pill ; calomel is a rougher medicine, and should never be given in this complaint excepting when the bowels are very costive,—it should never be preferred.

The blue pill therefore being determined on, it should be remembered that it is only given for a particular purpose, so that when this purpose shall be answered, it should be laid aside. It very often happens that this object is perfectly accomplished in three or four doses of this medicine, and the stools from being very dark and unnatural, become of a brownish yellow color.—It is astonishing to see how constantly the tongue will sympathize with this healthier action of the liver, becoming clean and moist.

This medicine is generally put up in pills of five grains weight, in each. The best way of managing it, is to take one of these pills every other night for three or four times, and then leave them off for a few days, and observe the effect produced. They may be taken with the aperients at the same time ; or, if the bowels are too relaxed, the blue pill may be taken one night and the aperients the next, alternately.

In cases of great weakness, or whenever the pill is thought to weaken, the bitter infusion of camomile should be taken twice a day, at the same time, and the soda or drops of hortshorn may be added, if required. If, which is very unlikely, in this mild and cautious way of taking mercury, any tenderness of the gums should happen, it should be instantly laid aside. This effect is not required and never need be suffered.

Thus has the proper use of mercury, in dyspepsia, been plainly and particularly pointed out;—it is a valuable medicine in its proper place, but it is too often taken when it is not required ; and, at other times,

continued after all its purposes have been answered. If it were only taken in the cautious manner here directed, it would not meet with so much prejudice and opposition to its use. But, there is another and very important circumstance yet to be mentioned with regard to mercury ;—it is its use in that affection of the liver called LIVER DISEASE, for this is a very frequent termination of dyspepsia. Hitherto we have considered the use of mercury only in that slighter affection of the liver in which the bile is simply altered, and in this we have endeavoured to prevent the more serious disorder now alluded to ; but, when that opportunity has been neglected, and the vitiated bile has been suffered to continue for a length of time, the disease advances a step farther, and the liver becomes enlarged and hardened.—Now, this is a disorder whose nature and treatment should be understood by every one suffering with it, and the subject may be made so plain that every one of common sense may easily comprehend it.

With this view, and to assist the reader in forming a clear and definite idea of the size and situation of the liver and other parts,—a colored plate is given in the next page, and this, together with its explanation, renders the several stages of the disorder so plain that none can possibly fail to understand it.

It has been already mentioned, that in dyspepsia, there is scarcely a part of the body which may not be affected with occasional pains ; but there are some parts more frequently the seat of pain than others. These pains however may not be of such a kind as to be increased on pressure, or connected with any degree of fever ;—such, therefore, are nervous, and do not require bleeding. But, there is another kind of pain, one which *is* increased on pressure, and which *is* connected, more or less, with fever ; this is the pain we speak of here, for this is inflammatory, and requires the assistance of a little bleeding, or some local remedy, to remove it. We will suppose the liver to be the seat of inflammation. If this is acute or active inflammation, then pain will be complained of, and there will be fever in proportion to its severity ; but, if it is slow or chronic inflammation, pain will scarcely be felt or not at all, unless pressure on the part be made. Now the plate which is given on the following page, will show the part of the body on which this pressure should be made.

PLATE IV. Shows the size and situation of the Liver, &c.

The letter A points out the lungs, often the seat of disease in dyspepsia; B—the situation of the heart; C—the liver. This chiefly occupies the right side, running towards the left. It is situated under the lungs, so that in a deep breath the lungs press down upon the liver, and, when pain is felt on doing so, we know that it is the seat of inflammation.

But the most useful part of this plate is in showing where, and how much, the liver descends below the ribs, so that you can tell where to press it with the fingers. Below the ribs and on the right side, and in the pit of the stomach, it will be seen that the liver is unprotected by any bony structure, so that it can easily be felt. It is of the utmost consequence to know when the process of inflammation begins in this organ, and nothing is more easy. It often happens, that slow or chronic inflammation is going on, in an internal organ, without actual pain; but, on pressing such parts, a sense of tenderness is instantly discovered. This, therefore, is the rule with regard to the inflammation of the liver, and the proper places where such pressure may be made, is rendered clear to every one by the plate.

D—further shows the gall-bladder, E—the stomach, and F—the beginning of the first intestine, or where the second stage of the digestive process is completed.

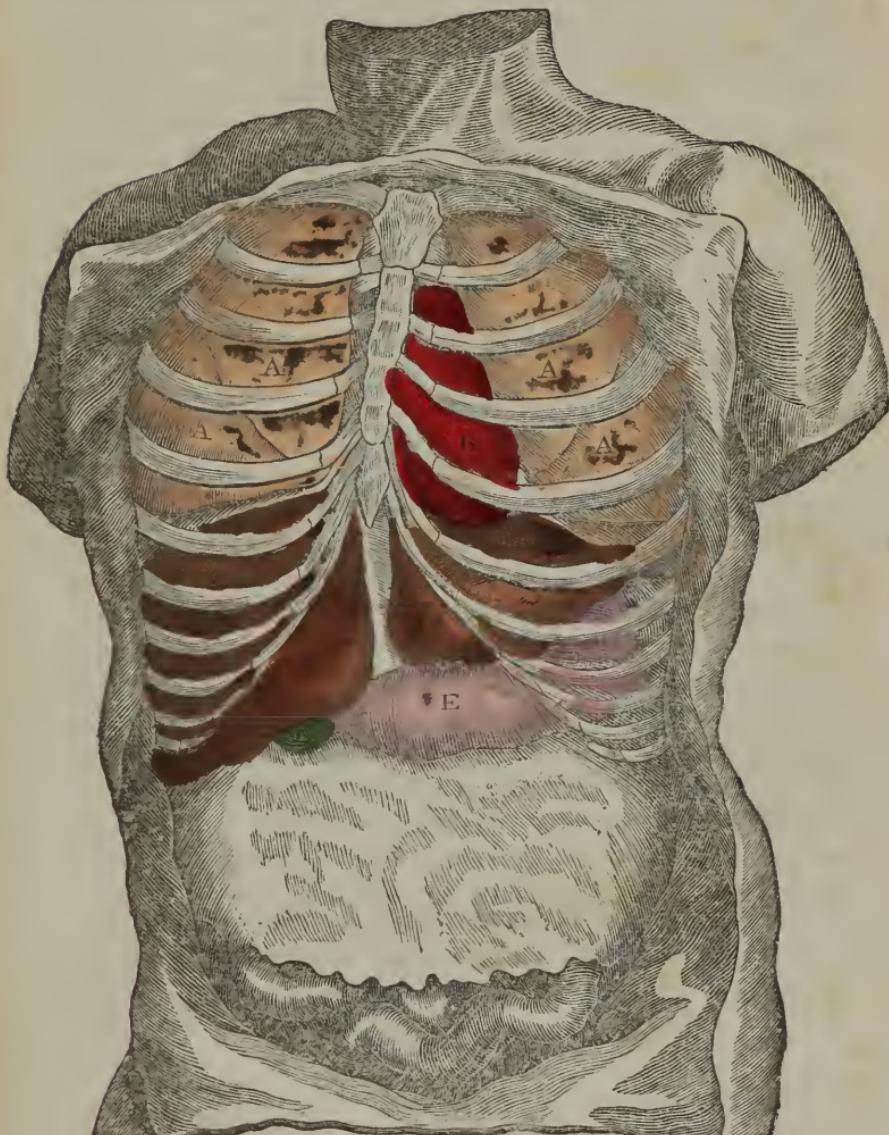
LIVER DISEASE.

In disease of the liver, there is not only a sense of tenderness and pain on pressure, but there is often so much hardness and enlargement of this organ as to be felt distinctly with the hand. This is best ascertained in spare, emaciated people, and in such the liver may sometimes be seen to bulge out, or to give the right side a greater fulness than the left.

With respect to the *use* of mercury in that stage of dyspepsia called *liver disease*, nothing which the author could now write, would be more clear and explicit than what is stated on this subject in ano-

Plate 4.

SITUATION OF THE LIVER, AND OTHER ORGANS.



- A. The lungs.
- B. Situation of the heart.
- C. Situation of the liver,—showing the part which may be felt below the ribs, &c.
- D. Gall-bladder.
- E. Stomach.
- F. Beginning of the first intestine.

ther place, and he will, therefore, abstract the following paragraph or two.

"Having mentioned that this enlarged and hardened state of the liver is frequently the result of previous disease, hot climate, or hard drinking, and is a mark of a broken down state of constitution, in which little is to be done beside upholding the remaining strength and vigor of it, it should also be mentioned, that it does occasionally come on from other causes, and may be seen in young and healthy persons. In this case great good is to be done, and the treatment is to be varied accordingly. It is in these instances of liver disease, that mercury is beneficial, but it should be given in a very different way from that in which it usually is. Those large quantities which salivate and weaken the constitution are often hurtful; while very small doses, and these continued for a certain length of time, are exceedingly beneficial and curative."

"The quantity of mercury should be so small as to produce no sensible effect, so that the patient should hardly feel that he is taking mercury. The blue pill is by far the best and safest preparation. Even so small a dose as two grains of blue pill, taken every night, if it be continued for a month or two, or until the disease is found to be removed, will be quite enough; and if this should by chance, in the least degree, affect the health, it may be discontinued for a day or two. If calomel be preferred, it should be given in doses of half a grain, rubbed up with a few grains of chalk, or with three or four grains of the extract of hemlock. The bowels should be kept open by taking with each dose of the blue pill, the aperients, No. 2, if necessary; or every other morning, a tea-spoonful of epsom salts in half a pint of water, either warm or cold. A large warm plaster should be continually worn upon the right side, over the region of the liver. This is a plan which has been found wonderfully efficacious in such cases as are not connected with a shattered state of constitution; and if it be happily adopted early, and followed up in a due and persevering manner, the best possible chance of success will be secured."

Leeches, or cupping.—Whenever pain is complained of in the situation of the liver; or whenever tenderness is felt on pressing the right side with the fingers, it may be concluded that there is inflammation of the liver, and this is best relieved by leeches or cupping.

This is a state which cannot be neglected without the risque of one or other of those serious disorders, which have been spoken of in a former part of this chapter.

If, however, there is acute pain and fever, blood should be taken from the arm, and the diet should be low. The blue pill should be also given, as before directed, and in the morning half a tea-spoonful of epsom salts, in half a pint of water, as an aperient.

Let it always be remembered, that there is seldom any strength to spare in cases of dyspepsia, and, therefore, bleeding should be very limited.

Blisters, or warm plasters, to the side.—These are of use in the same circumstances as those just mentioned, and are recommended in milder cases, or when there is some objection to the bleeding, such as extreme bodily weakness. A warm plaster is always a safe, and very often useful application; and one that can never injure. Warm fomentations are also useful.

Dover's Powder.—This is the last remedy it is thought necessary to mention in the treatment of dyspepsia, and this is useful in consequence of a weak and irritable state of the bowels, which sometimes happens. The cause of this is generally some offensive material that should first be carried off by the aperients, No. 2; but when this is done, it is sometimes necessary to allay the irritation, and nothing answers this purpose better than Dover's powder;—it should be made into pills of $2\frac{1}{2}$ grains, and one, two, or three, may be taken for a dose. If the blue pill should happen to purge too much, one of these pills might be taken with each dose, or one with every dose of the bitter strengthening infusions.

In conclusion, and by way of presenting to the reader a short and definite idea of the nature, causes, and treatment of dyspepsia, it is proposed in as clear a way as possible, to repeat some of the remarks which have now been made.

First,—it has been observed, that dyspepsia is a disease which begins with indigestion, but proceeds by certain stages, well defined, to terminate in some of the most distressing and fatal maladies to which human nature is exposed.

It has been further shown, that the causes of dyspepsia are gene-

rally of such a nature as to be completely in the power of any person to avoid.

Then, with regard to the treatment of dyspepsia, it appears, that, in the early stages, that is, in indigestion, the cure consists, partly, in avoiding such causes, (and these have been carefully and minutely pointed out,) and partly, by mild and simple remedies which strengthen the stomach, and regulate the bowels.

But, the disease proceeding, and sometimes in an early stage, another circumstance occurs ;—this disturbed condition of the stomach spreads to the liver, and alters the secretion of the bile, and, then, an additional remedy is recommended. This remedy is the blue pill, —the mildest preparation of mercury ; and the occasion for its use is always indicated by the color of the evacuation of the bowels.

Mercury, however, is not to be used in the promiscuous and unguarded manner in which it frequently is. The natural color of the stools, it has been stated, is a yellowish brown ; and as soon as this color is restored, the occasion for it ceases, and it should then be discontinued. Moreover, even in this condition of the stools, it is not absolutely necessary that mercury should be administered ; for, the mild aperient pills of this Domestic Treatise are abundantly sufficient, in a great majority of cases, to restore this healthy color and condition of the stools.

Again ;—from the very commencement of dyspepsia, and during its whole continuance, it is a common thing to hear of occasional pains in various parts of the body, as the head, the chest, the side &c. ; these, it has been stated, are only nervous pains at first, and are best relieved by remedies which are strengthening to the stomach ; and a regulated diet. But, after these nervous pains have been frequently repeated, they change their nature, and, instead of being nervous, they become inflammatory. This is the most eventful period of dyspepsia, for it is now that the foundation is laying for all those dangerous and incurable maladies which have been mentioned in a former page.

The utmost stress has, therefore, been laid upon the particular changes which are now taking place ; and, in order to enable every person to detect such changes as soon as they are about to happen in the liver and other organs, a colored plate is given, which makes this subject so plain, that none can fail to understand it.

The treatment also differs here, and local remedies are now required,—such as blisters, warm plasters, and the like; also, occasional bleeding by leeches or otherwise, and a lower kind of diet.

Further, a mild and gentle use of mercury is often now required in this, which may be termed the second stage of the disease.

At length, however, and after long continued pains and inflammation, the part in which these have occurred, becomes enlarged and hardened. This part most frequently is the liver, which has given rise to the term, **LIVER DISEASE**.

The treatment of this affection is also carefully attended to, and the proper use of mercury, or the blue bill, has been defined.

But it should still be added, that the same effect which dyspeptic inflammation has upon the liver, it also has upon every other part in which pain or irritation happens. It would not have been consistent with the limits of this chapter, to detail the symptoms and the treatment of all these varied affections, especially as these are given in other pages of the Domestic Guide ; but as some may see this treatise who possibly may not possess the Guide to Medicine, it is proposed to mention some of these, and give a general hint or two upon the subject of their treatment.

Apoplexy is one of these.—It is seldom that a fit of apoplexy happens without premonitory symptoms, and these affections of the head generally arise from some disorder of the intestinal passages, the cause or consequence of dyspepsia.

Water in the head.—With respect to this complaint, it almost always is the consequence of some dyspeptic condition of the bowels, and may generally be prevented. It requires only to see the intimate connection between these two diseases, and to note the symptoms which point out its inroad on the brain, to stop the increase of this frightful malady. The purgatives, No. 1, are chiefly to be relied on in the origin of this complaint.

Dyspeptic consumption.—This also is a consequence of indigestion spreading to the lungs instead of the more common organ—the liver. It is frequently cured, but much more frequently prevented,

by the remedies and management proper for dyspepsia. The blue pill is to be carried to the length of some soreness of the gums, and the bitter infusions may be used ; but small bleedings, and a blister to the chest or side, can seldom be dispensed with, and the diet should be free from every thing stimulating. Indeed, this kind of consumption should be treated as other cases, with the addition of the use of the blue pill. The strength also should be more carefully preserved than in ordinary cases, so that even local bleeding, whenever it is proper, should be small in quantity.

Stricture of the rectum and piles, are also a frequent consequence of dyspepsia ; but with regard to piles, it is next to impossible for those who take this mild aperient medicine ever to be afflicted with them.

Many other disorders might be mentioned here, particularly those of females, most of which take their origin from, and are afterwards aggravated by, dyspepsia ; but these however, must be left to the judgment and good sense of the reader to perceive.

SECOND EDITION,

OF

DR. RALPH'S

DOMESTIC GUIDE TO MEDICINE.

This little volume being designed for the use of every family, particularly those residing in the country, is written in the plainest possible manner, and is intended to enable every individual both male and female, to undertake with safety the management of those disorders which most frequently occur in private and domestic life.

It has been found that long and burdensome descriptions of diseases are quite unfit for general and domestic purposes,—they only lead to confuse the reader, and are of very little use to any one. By a simple, yet universal law of nature, all diseases, both of mind and body, are connected with the organs of digestion ;—that is, with the stomach, liver, and intestinal passages. No disorder, let it spring from whatsoever cause it may, can continue any length of time without disturbing some of these ; and, therefore, these organs constitute the natural channel through which diseases are most safely and successfully attacked. Moreover, it is astonishing to find how much simplicity, as well as safety, this principle affords to those who practice in Domestic Medicine. Indeed, it forms the only ground on which a private individual should attempt to treat his own complaint ; for, while it offers the more natural and efficient means of cure, it is one which is entirely free from danger or mistake. What disorder is there, for instance, that can possibly be injured by means which preserve the healthy action of the stomach and digestive organs, or which purify the blood and regulate the bowels ?

The connection of diseases with the organs of digestion being the ground work of this Domestic Guide, the remedies which are needed therefore are but very few, and these, for the most part, are innocent, and chiefly those which every house affords. Whenever any medicine of a more active nature is required, the greatest care is taken in this domestic book to make its management plain and clearly understood.

In the second edition of this book, also there are several new and useful chapters added,—chiefly with a view of rendering it more interesting to female readers. Indeed, no labour has been spared to make this little work a valuable volume to all classes of society ; and, being written by one of much experience, the author trusts it will find a place in every family, and prove a lasting source of satisfaction and utility.

(Turn Over.)

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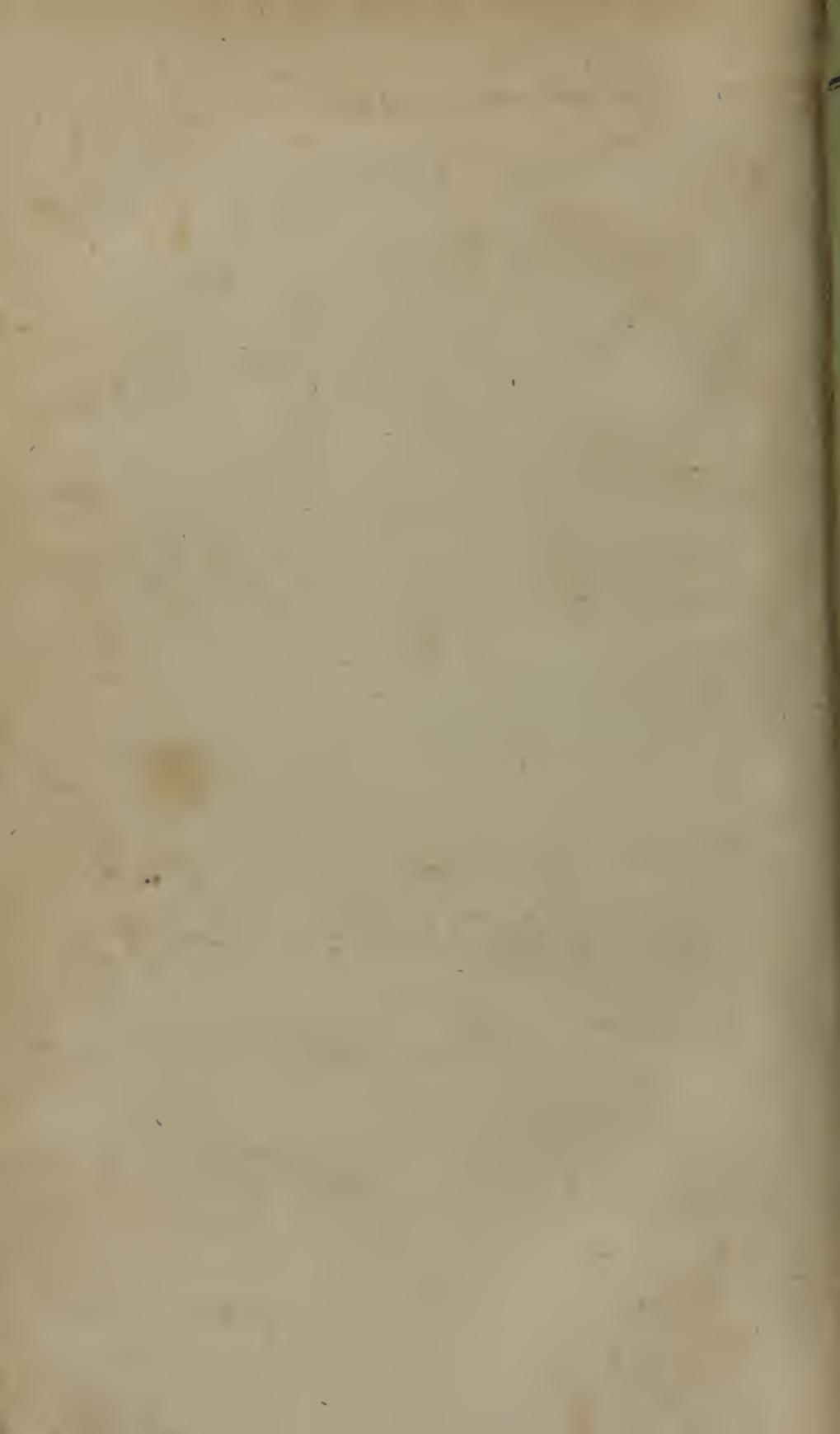
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A

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